

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 AID-05 EB-08 HA-05 SCS-06
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R 220500Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9101
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USUN NEW YORK 760
USIA WASHDC
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 5074

BANGKOK FOR RED; CINCPAC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, EAID, MV

SUBJ: USG INTERESTS AND ACTIONS IN THE MALDIVES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: U.S. INTEREST IN THE MALDIVES IS MODEST.
WE HAVE NO COMMERICAL OBJECTIVES. OUR POLITICAL GOALS ARE
LIMITED TO OBTAINING GOM SUPPORT ON ISSUES THAT ARISE IN THE
UN AND IN DENYING TO OTHERS THE USE OF GAN FOR UNFRIENDLY
MILITARY PURPOSES. IN THE PAST, GOM HAS GIVEN US SUPPORT AND
MAY CONTINUE TO DO SO WITHOUT ANY EFFORT ON OUR PART. AID
HAS FUNDED FOUR STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
IN BEIRUT AND IS CURRENTLY FUNDING TWO STUDENTS THERE. AID
HAS ALSO CONTRIBUTED BOOKS THROUGH CARE. IN VIEW OF INCREASING
MALDIVIAN REQUESTS FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND REPORTED
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RECENT SOVIET MOVES TO OBTAIN THE USE OF GAN, PERHAPS HEIGHT-
ENED BY LOSS OF BERBERA, THERE ARE JUSTIFIABLE ADDITIONAL STEPS
WE SHOULD TAKE NOT TO NOURISH OUR MODEST INTEREST. THESE ARE:
A. THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD UNDERTAKE TO PROMPTLY RESOLVE THE
PROBLEM WITH THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WHICH
CONTINUES TO DELAY THE ISSUANCE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S CREDENTIALS
TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MALDIVES.

B. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. A USAID PROGRAM FOR THE MALDIVES IS NOT JUSTIFIED BY U.S. INTEREST. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT AID/W SHOULD ENCOURAGE A FEW SELECTED PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS TO INSTITUTE PROGRAMS THERE. USG ASSISTANCE TO THE GOM AT MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS WOULD ALSO BE A WELCOME MOVE. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS. THE GOM MAINTAINS NO EMBASSIES OR OTHER REPRESENTATION OF ANY KIND ABROAD (INCLUDING SRI LANKA) WITH THE SINGLE EXCEPTION OF ITS MISSION AT THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK. PRESIDENT NASIR RESERVES ALL CONVERSATION AND DISCUSSION ON IMPORTANT MATTERS TO HIMSELF IN MALE. OUR INABILITY TO APPROACH HIM AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL SEVERELY LIMITS OUR POTENTIAL TO INFLUENCE THE GOM ON ANY MATTER OF CONCERN TO US, FROM THE PROPOSED OPIC AGREEMENT TO THE IMPRISONED AMERICAN CITIZEN. QUESTION OF WHY AMBASSADOR NOT YET CONFIRMED TO MALDIVES HAS BEEN RAISED BY GOM OFFICIALS DURING RECENT VISITS ON CONSULAR PROBLEMS. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MALDIVES HAS SUPPORTED US IN THE UN FOR REASONS THAT ARE FRANKLY UNCLEAR TO US AT THIS DISTANCE. THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE REASON TO CONTINUE TO DENY OURSELVES ACCESS TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF THE GOM, WITH PREDICTABLE FEELINGS OF NEGLECT ARISING IN MALE AND MANIFESTING THEMSELVES ELSEWHERE.

3. BILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE
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REQUESTS FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES. WE RESPOND NEGATIVELY CITING THE CONGRESSIONAL STRICTURE LIMITING TO FORTY THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES TO WHICH WE CAN GIVE BILATERAL ECONOMIC AID. OUR NEGATIVISM HAS A CERTAIN INCONSISTENCY WITH RECENT U.S. PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENTS, ROUTINELY SENT THE GOM BY USIS, WHICH MAY HAVE RAISED MALDIVIAN EXPECTATIONS FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE. WASHINGTON HAS ANNOUNCED A POLICY OF HELPING THE POORER COUNTRIES THAT LEGITIMATELY NEED HELP. THE GOM IS AWARE OF THIS POLICY AND THAT THE MALDIVES FIT THE CATEGORY. WE ACCORDINGLY RECOMMEND THAT AID WASHINGTON UNDERTAKE AS A MATTER OF POLICY TO INVITE A FEW SELECTED PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS' INTEREST TO THE MALDIVES. PVO'S WITH PROGRAMS IN EDUCATION, HEALTH, FAMILY PLANNING, OR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE WELCOME. THE ONLY PVO IN SRI LANKA IS CARE, AND THAT ORGANIZATION'S NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS SHOULD BE ALERTED TO OPPORTUNITIES TO EXTEND ITS EFFORTS TO THE MALDIVES. OTHER LIKELY CANDIDATES MIGHT INCLUDE: FAMILY PLANNING INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION; THE ASIA FOUNDATION; THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE SERVICE CORPS; THE EAST-WEST CENTER.

4. MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE. THE UNDP HAS A MODEST PROGRAM

IN THE MALDIVES AND CAN UNDOUBTEDLY BE COUNTED ON TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND ITS SERVICES THERE. HOWEVER, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MIGHT E OF ASSISTANCE TO THE GOM WITH OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS. GOM LACKS REPRESENTATION AT: MANILA - ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK; WASHINGTON - IBRD, ETC.; BRUSSELS - EEC. WE BELIEVE THAT U.S. REPRESENTATION AT THESE ORGANIZATIONS, WITHOUT IN ANY WAY ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE GOM, MIGHT UNDERTAKE AS A MATTER OF ROUTINE, TO FORWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS OF PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE DIRECTLY TO THE GOM AT MALE, OR THROUGH THIS EMBASSY. IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT THE GOM IS NOW MISSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEEDED HELP DUE TO LACK OF INFORMATION ON THEIR AVAILABILITY.

WRIGGINS

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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